

The Will
of a
Methodist Preacher's
Widow



DREW Theological Seminary is not simply a group of fine buildings, nor a campus of extraordinary beauty. It is not alone a faculty of singular distinction nor a course of studies marked by high requirements. It is all these things and more, but essentially Drew is a spirit, a spirit of self-forgetting service, a spirit of patient love and courageous faith.

In that spirit John Dennis Hammond graduated from Drew Theological Seminary in 1875, fifty years ago, to render distinguished service for the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. In that same spirit his brave little wife stood by his side through the long years of his ministry as preacher, college president, and secretary of the Board of Education of his church.

Into the din of metropolitan life recently there came a hush as thousands of people read in the evening papers a mother's letter to her children. It was one of those communications, now yellowing with the years, such as many of us confess to hoarding in our safe deposit boxes, addressed "To my children," and signed with the dearest name. It was the will of Lily Hardy Hammond, widow of the Reverend John Dennis Hammond, who had gone to join her husband in their celestial home.

The spirit of that devoted wife and mother and of her husband is the spirit of Drew. It is that spirit which has characterized the Seminary for fifty-eight years and which has helped Drew alumni to maintain the spiritual glow and to be obedient unto the heavenly vision.

The Commencement exercises in 1925 were on May 12th, exactly seventy-five years after the birth of John Dennis Hammond. The letter of Mrs. Hammond which follows is a reminder of the "School of the Prophets" which had so large a part in the training of this Southern Methodist saint:

Dear Children:

I've just made my will, and this is to tell you what I want done with my little personal belongings. Don't keep anything just because it was mine; they are just things and worn and shabby at that; love doesn't need such things for remembrance.

Most of my books are old and many of them I haven't looked into for years. I have loved and kept them because they have enlarged my life. Henry is to have them and my Bible, typewriter and Verdun vase.

I won't be separated from any of you, dear children. I'll just be closer to God and will understand better the ways in which prayers and faith can open ways through which God can help you, and I'll be able at least to love you with all my heart and without anything in that love that will make you feel as if I wanted to control you or bother you.

Bury my body as cheaply as you can and forget it. Don't wear mourning, unless of course 'Lynx' wants to. And think of me as alive, alive beyond your farthest thought, and learning more and more the things I want to know and growing more toward what God wants me to become.

I think, maybe, John will have our home ready when I come and we'll have a real home at last.

Love one another. Hold fast to that whether you understand one another or not, and remember nothing really matters except being kind to one another and to all the world as far as you can reach.

Your Lovinigest Mother.

Printed by Drew Theological Seminary
Madison, New Jersey